Pronunciation – O / Ö / U / Ü Sounds

How are long and short Ö and Ü sounds made?

Here are the rules again for making the Ö and Ü sounds:

- **Ö** (long [øː], short [œ]): The Ö is spoken like a German E, but with your lips rounded such as when you make an O sound.
- **Ü** (long [yː], short [ʏ]): The Ü is spoken like a German I but with your lips rounded when you make a U sound.
- When you make the Ö and Ü sounds, your lips make a shape like when you whistle or kiss.
- Ö and Ü can also be long/closed and short/open!

How can you tell a long vowel from a short vowel from the spelling?

Here are the rules again for the long and short vowels:

- **long vowels:** doubling of vowels (*aa*, *ee*, *oo*, *ie*) or after an *h* or *ß*;
- **short vowels:** followed by a double consonant**.** Often (unfortunately not always), two or more consonants follow a short vowel.

1. Many Ö and Ü sounds are created when plurals are formed. Form the plural of the following words.

O Sound (Singular)	Ö Sound (Plural)	U Sound (Singular)	Ü Sound (Plural)
*das L**o**ch*		*der K**u**ss*	
*das W**o**rt*		*die W**u**rst*	
*der H**o**f*		*der Br**u**der*	
*der K**o**ch*		*der Fl**u**ss*	
*der L**o**hn*		*der Z**u**g*	
*der **O**fen*		*der Fl**u**g*	
*der S**o**hn*		*der F**u**ß*	
*die T**o**chter*		*die M**u**tter*	

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2. Have another look at the singular words. Which words have a long O, which have a short O? Which have a long U, which have a short U?

Short O Sound (Singular)	**Ö Sound (Plural)**	**Short U Sound (Singular)**	**Ü Sound (Plural)**
Long O Sound (Singular)	**Ö Sound (Plural)**	**Long U Sound (Singular)**	**Ü Sound (Plural)**

3. Now compare the O and U in singular words with the Ö and Ü in plural words. What do you notice?

Singular short U	..... plural
Singular long U	..... plural
Singular short O	..... plural
Singular long O	..... plural

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Answer Key

1.

O Sound (Singular)	Ö Sound (Plural)	U Sound (Singular)	Ü Sound (Plural)
*das L**o**ch*	*die Löcher*	*der K**u**ss*	*die Küsse*
*das W**o**rt*	*die Wörter*	*die W**u**rst*	*die Würste*
*der H**o**f*	*die Höfe*	*der Br**u**der*	*die Brüder*
*der K**o**ch*	*die Köche*	*der Fl**u**ss*	*die Flüsse*
*der L**o**hn*	*die Löhne*	*der Z**u**g*	*die Züge*
*der **O**fen*	*die Öfen*	*der Fl**u**g*	*die Flüge*
*der S**o**hn*	*die Söhne*	*der F**u**ß*	*die Füße*
*die T**o**chter*	*die Töchter*	*die M**u**tter*	*die Mütter*

2.

Short O Sound (Singular)	Ö Sound (Plural)	Short U Sound (Singular)	Ü Sound (Plural)
*das L**o**ch*	*die Löcher*	*der K**u**ss*	*die Küsse*
*das W**o**rt*	*die Wörter*	*die W**u**rst*	*die Würste*
*der K**o**ch*	*die Köche*	*der Fl**u**ss*	*die Flüsse*
*die T**o**chter*	*die Töchter*	*die M**u**tter*	*die Mütter*
Long O Sound (Singular)	**Ö Sound (Plural)**	**Long U Sound (Singular)**	**Ü Sound (Plural)**
*der H**o**f*	*die Höfe*	*der Br**u**der*	*die Brüder*
*der L**o**hn*	*die Löhne*	*der Z**u**g*	*die Züge*
*der **O**fen*	*die Öfen*	*der Fl**u**g*	*die Flüge*
*der S**o**hn*	*die Söhne*	*der F**u**ß*	*die Füße*

3.

kurzes U im Singular	**kurzes Ü im Plural**
langes U im Singular	**langes Ü im Plural**
kurzes O im Singular	**kurzes Ö im Plural**
langes O im Singular	**langes Ö im Plural**

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